

Message Text

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NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
USCINCEUR
SECDEF WASHDC 0000

JCS WASHDC 0000
CIA WASHDC 0000
NSC WASHDC 0000
USICA
POUCH ALGIERS

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD, TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - JULY 7

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE
EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR JULY 7, 1978.
FYI ONLY, SPOKESMAN TODAY WAS HODDING CARTER III.

Q. WHY DON'T WE ASK THE UN TO REPLACE THESE SYRIANS WHICH
THE AMERICAN LEBANESE LEAGUE IN THIS AD IN THE WASHINGTON
POST CHARGES WITH KILLING 60,000 MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN,
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WOUNDING 200,000 MORE, AND PILLAGING 131 TOWNS?

A. I DON'T HAVE A COMMENT ON THE AD.

Q. CERTAINLY THE STATE DEPARTMENT IS VERY DEEPLY CON-
CERNED ABOUT THIS.

A. WE ARE EXTRAORDINARILY CONCERNED, AS WE HAVE INDICATED
IN STATEMENTS FROM THIS PODIUM REPEATEDLY. WE UNDERSTAND
THE CONCERN OF ALL THE PEOPLE IN THAT AREA, WHICH IS WHY
WE ARE URGING MUTUAL RESTRAINT ON ALL THE PARTIES IN THE
AREA.

Q. APPARENTLY WE HAVE URGED MUTUAL RESTRAINT FOR MONTHS,

AND THE SYRIANS ARE NOT RESTRAINED. WHY DON'T WE ASK THAT
THE SYRIANS GET OUT AND LET THEIR PLACE BE TAKEN BY THE UN
PEACEKEEPING, OR DO WE FEEL THAT THE UN SHOULD ONLY RE-
PLACE JEWISH GROUPS?

A. WE ARE EXPLORING EVERY POSSIBLE AVENUE TO BRING PEACE
TO THAT AREA. THOSE APPROACHES WHICH SEEM TO BE POSSIBLE
AND REWARDING, WE ARE GOING TO PURSUE FURTHER. I AM IN NO
POSITION TO BE TALKING ABOUT WHAT THE AVENUES ARE. I
WOULD SIMPLY SAY THAT WE ARE CONCERNED ENOUGH THAT WE ARE
CONSULTING, AS WE HAVE BEEN URGENTLY WITH A NUMBER OF
PEOPLE IN THIS AREA.

Q. YESTERDAY IN YOUR STATEMENT YOU SAID, QUOTE WE ARE DETERMINED TO TAKE WHATEVER STEPS WE CONSIDER NECESSARY TO HELP ESTABLISH PEACE AND SECURITY. UNQUOTE. CAN YOU DEFINE WHAT STEPS YOU CONSIDER POSSIBLE? FOR EXAMPLE, WOULD YOU CONSIDER ANY KIND OF MILITARY INVOLVEMENT BY THE UNITED STATES POSSIBLE?

A. I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT IS AN ALTERNATIVE WHICH IS UNDER UNCLASSIFIED

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CONSIDERATION.

Q. WHAT ARE THE OTHER POSSIBILITIES, THEN?

A. I DON'T THINK I'M GOING TO BE ABLE TO GO DOWN A LIST OF POSSIBILITIES. THEY HAVE BEEN SOMEWHAT TALKED ABOUT IN THE PRESS ALREADY AS TO SOME SUGGESTIONS, SOME APPROACHES WE'VE MADE. I THINK WHILE WE'RE IN THE MIDST OF WHAT AMOUNTS TO RATHER URGENT CONVERSATIONS WITH A NUMBER OF PARTIES IN THE AREA, IT REALLY DOESN'T DO ME ANY GOOD OR THE PROCESS ANY GOOD TO TRY TO ITEMIZE WHAT IT IS THAT WE THINK MIGHT BE DONE.

Q. IS THE OPTION TO ASK FOR A SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING STILL SUSPENDED?

A. YES, IT IS. LET ME SAY THAT WE ARE, AT THIS POINT, GRATIFIED THAT THE CEASE-FIRE SEEMS TO BE HOLDING, IN THE MAIN. WE HAVE NOTICED THERE HAS BEEN SOME SMALL ARMS FIRE, BUT NO SERIOUS OUTBREAK OF FIGHTING.

Q. WHEN YOU SAY A CEASE-FIRE, ARE YOU DEFINING IT THAT THERE HAS BEEN AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE RIGHT WING AND THE SYRIAN TROOPS OR JUST THAT THE SYRIANS HAVE STOPPED SHELLING THE CHRISTIAN AREAS?

A. AS I UNDERSTAND IT, WITH THE SMALL EXCEPTIONS THAT I NOTED ON BOTH SIDES, THERE SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN A CEASE-FIRE.

Q. SO, WHEN THE SYRIANS STOPPED, THE RIGHT-WING STOPPED?

A. THAT'S WHAT WE UNDERSTAND, I MIGHT ALSO ADD THAT WE ARE GRATIFIED THAT THE REPORTS THAT PRESIDENT SARKIS UNCLASSIFIED

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MIGHT STEP DOWN HAVE NOT BEEN BORNE OUT. LEBANON NEEDS A HAND AT THE HELM AT THIS SENSITIVE STAGE, AND WE ASSURE THAT PRESIDENT SARKIS WILL BE DOING HIS VERY BEST TO ASSURE THAT THE FIGHTING DOES NOT RESUME, AND THAT A

SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION TO THE PROBLEMS WHICH BROUGHT ON THIS FIGHTING CAN BE ACHIEVED. I MIGHT ADD FURTHER THAT WE DO HOPE STRONGLY THAT ALL THE CITIZENS OF LEBANON WILL SUPPORT THEIR GOVERNMENT IN TRYING TO RESTORE STABILITY AND END THE FIGHTING. AGAIN, I JUST WANT TO REPEAT OUR CALL FOR MAXIMUM RESTRAINT BY ALL THE PARTIES IN THE AREA.

Q. SARKIS OF LEBANON SAID PUBLICLY THAT MANY OF THE SYRIAN ACTIONS THAT WERE TAKEN IN LEBANON WERE NOT APPROVED BY HIM PERSONALLY, OR HIS GOVERNMENT. DO YOU STILL VIEW AFTER THOSE ACTIONS HAVE BEEN TAKEN THAT THE SYRIAN ROLE IN LEBANON ARE STILL AS A PEACEKEEPING FORCE, OR WHAT?

A. WHAT WE ARE WORKING ON RIGHT NOW IS THE URGENCY OF ACHIEVING AND MAINTAINING THE CEASE-FIRE AND FINDING A WAY TO AVOID THE REPETITION OF THE EVENTS OF THE RECENT PAST; AND AT THIS POINT, OUR EFFORTS ARE AIMED IN THAT DIRECTION, AND I DON'T THINK I CAN SERVE THEM VERY WELL BY GOING MUCH FURTHER THAN WHAT I'M SAYING.

Q. IN YOUR CONSULTATIONS ON THIS LEBANESE PROBLEM, HAVE YOU BEEN IN CLOSE CONSULTATION WITH THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT ABOUT THIS?

A. I DO NOT BELIEVE SO.

Q. HAVE WE BEEN IN CONSULTATION AT ALL WITH THE SOVIETS?

A. I'M NOT AWARE OF IT.

Q. WHEN YOU SPEAK ABOUT NO MILITARY STEP AS BEING AN UNCLASSIFIED

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ALTERNATIVE, YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT A U.S. MILITARY STEP. SOMEBODY ELSE, MIGHT IT BE DIFFERENT?

A. I'M REALLY URGING, AS I DID YESTERDAY, THAT IN FACT WHAT WE WANT IS A BACK-DOWN, BACK-OFF, A PULL-AWAY, A LESSENING OF THE POSSIBILITY OF ESCALATED MILITARY ACTION RATHER THAN ESCALATED MILITARY ACTIVITY.

Q. IN OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH PRESIDENT ASSAD OF SYRIA, WE ASSUME THAT THIS HAS TAKEN PLACE, ISN'T THAT RIGHT?

A. WE HAVE BEEN IN CONSULTATION WITH THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT.

Q. HAVE THE SYRIANS GIVEN ANY INDICATION THAT THEY WILL RETURN TO THE STATUS QUO ANTE, SO TO SPEAK, AS IT WAS, SAY, THREE WEEKS AGO?

A. I'M REALLY NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO GO INTO OUR CON-
SULTATIONS WITH THE SYRIANS OR THE LEBANESE OR THE
ISRAELIS OR ANYBODY ELSE.

Q. CAN YOU RELATE THIS NOW TO THE BROADER PICTURE OF THE
NEGOTIATIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST, THAT IS WHETHER THE MOST
RECENT EVENTS IN LEBANON HAVE HAD ANY IMPACT SO FAR ON
THE PEACE PROCESS?

A. I'M NOT ABLE TO OFFER ANY SPECULATION FROM HERE. IT
IS OBVIOUS, HOWEVER, THAT AN ESCALATION OF FIGHTING IN
THAT REGION CANNOT HELP BUT HAVE A BAD EFFECT ON THE OVER-
ALL SEARCH FOR PEACE. THAT IS SORT OF A GIVEN.

Q. IN VIEW OF THE SYRIAN ROLE IN THIS FIGHTING, IS THE
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STATE DEPARTMENT STILL DETERMINED TO CARRY THROUGH WITH
THE REQUEST FOR DOLS 112 MILLION IN ECONOMIC AID TO THE
SYRIAN GOVERNMENT IN THE FISCAL '79 FOREIGN AID BUDGET?

A. I DON'T KNOW OF ANY CHANGE IN THAT BUT I'LL TAKE THE
QUESTION.

Q. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THE SOLUTION LIES OR DOES NOT LIE
IN THE DISARMING OF THE CHRISTIAN MILITIAS?

A. THE VARIOUS POSSIBILITIES THAT HAVE BEEN OFFERED RANGE
ACROSS THE SPECTRUM, AND I CAN'T REALLY COMMENT ON WHAT'S
A GOOD IDEA OR A BAD IDEA. A NUMBER OF IDEAS HAVE BEEN
ADVANCED.

Q. IS THIS A SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION?

A. WHAT I SAID WAS THAT WE ARE TRYING TO EXPLORE ALL KINDS
OF AVENUES, BUT I'M SIMPLY NOT ABLE TO GO DOWN THE LIST OR
GIVE YOU A LIST OF WHAT IT IS WE'RE EXPLORING, INCLUDING
THAT ONE.

Q. DO YOU OBJECT TO THE ISRAELIS GIVING MILITARY AID TO
THE CHRISTIAN MILITIA AS LONG AS THEY DON'T USE OUR

WEAPONS?

A. WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO DO IS TO ENCOURAGE EVERYBODY TO
BACK AWAY FROM MILITARY CONFRONTATION, NOT FEED IT.

Q. THE PRESIDENT OF LEBANON YESTERDAY DECLARED THAT HE
WOULD RESIGN IF THE SYRIANS DIDN'T WITHDRAW THEIR CONDI-
TIONS AND SUBMIT TO HIS ORDERS. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO
SAY ON THAT? ARE YOU SUPPORTING HIS STAND?

A. OUR SUPPORT IS OF THAT GOVERNMENT AND PRESIDENT SARKIS.
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I'M NOT ABLE TO COMMENT ON THE STATEMENT. I JUST DON'T
HAVE THE CONTEXT OR ANYTHING OF THE SORT.

Q. YESTERDAY, AMBASSADOR PARKER VISITED HIM AND HE HAD A
WRITTEN MESSAGE FROM WASHINGTON TO PRESIDENT SARKIS. CAN
YOU TELL US ANYTHING ABOUT THAT?

A. NO. NO. WE HAVE HAD A GREAT NUMBER OF CONVERSATIONS
WITH THE LEBANESE OF VARIOUS SORTS.

Q. AP CARRIED A REPORT TODAY, ACTUALLY AN INTERVIEW WITH
THE PHALANGIST SPOKESMAN, WHEREBY HE IS QUOTED AS SAYING,
WHAT WE WANT IS PARTITION, AND HE DREW A MAP TO THE
CHRISTIAN LEBANON THEY WANT. WHERE DOES THE STATE DEPART-
MENT STAND ON THIS?

A. WE HAVE CONSTANTLY ASSERTED OUR VIEW THAT THE FULL
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF LEBANON IS THE OBJECTIVE OF
AMERICAN POLICY.

Q. YOU SAID EARLIER IN REFERENCE TO PRESIDENT SARKIS,
THAT HE WILL DO HIS BEST TO BRING SOME SORT OF SETTLEMENT
OF PEACE IN THE AREA, OR AT LEAST A CESSATION OF THE
FIGHTING. HOW DO YOU EXPECT HIM TO DO THIS? WITH WHAT?
WHAT TOOLS DOES HE HAVE TO BRING THIS ABOUT?

A. TO BEGIN WITH, HE HAS THE LEADERSHIP OF HIS OFFICE,
THE FACT THAT HE IS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LEBANESE
GOVERNMENT, AND THAT AS SUCH, HE UNDOUBTEDLY HAS INFLUENCE
AND STANDING WITH MANY OF THE PARTIES IN THE AREA.

Q. HAVE WE GIVEN HIM ANY ASSURANCES THAT WE WILL PROVIDE
HIM WITH DIPLOMATIC SUPPORT OR MILITARY SUPPORT OR
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ECONOMIC SUPPORT?

A. WE ARE PROVIDING HIM FULL DIPLOMATIC SUPPORT RIGHT
NOW. THAT'S WHAT MUCH OF THIS REPRESENTS.

Q. DOES THE DEPARTMENT HAVE ANY KIND OF ESTIMATE OF THE
NUMBER OF CASUALTIES ON BOTH SIDES IN THE LEBANESE AFFAIR
IN THE LAST WEEK?

A. I'LL SEE IF WE DO. LET ME TAKE IT. I DON'T KNOW HOW
ACCURATE WE'RE GOING TO BE.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING FURTHER ON THE ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN-AMERICAN TALKS IN LONDON AS TO THE CERTAINTY OF ITS TAKING PLACE, WHO IS GOING TO BE THERE, THE LOCALE?

A. WE HAVE HOPES THAT THE ISRAELI CABINET, ON SUNDAY, WILL DECIDE TO GO FORWARD WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY TALKS, BUT I REALLY CAN'T GO BEYOND THAT. THE EGYPTIANS HAVE SAID THEY'LL COME IF THERE IS A MEETING, BUT IT IS UP TO THE ISRAELI CABINET TO ANNOUNCE THAT.

Q. HAVE YOU ANY LIGHT AT ALL TO SHED ON THE DEEPENING MYSTERY OF THE F4S AND KFIRS FOR TAIWAN?

A. I THINK ON EVERY SUBJECT BOUND UP IN THAT OVERALL THING, I'M IN THE POSITION OF SAYING THAT NOTHING HAS CHANGED.

Q. SINCE WHEN? SOMETHING HAS CHANGED. THEY ARE NOT GOING TO BUY THE KFIRS.

A. SINCE YESTERDAY. SINCE MY SAYING THAT I DIDN'T HAVE A DECISION TO OFFER YOU ON OUR DECISION, ON THE PLANE PACKAGE FOR TAIWAN, AND THAT INsofar AS WHAT THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA WANTS TO DO ABOUT KFIRS, THAT IS THEIR DECISION.
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WE HAVE SIMPLY SAID THAT WE WOULD LOOK FAVORABLY ON A SALE, IF SUCH A SALE WOULD GO FORWARD, WHICH IS SOMETHING WE HAVE TO SAY TO EVEN MAKE IT POSSIBLE.

Q. O.K. SHALL WE DANCE?

A. YES.

Q. HAS THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT NOW BEEN MADE AWARE THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA DOESN'T WANT THE KFIRS?

A. HE HAVE CERTAINLY HAD THAT INDICATED.

Q. WERE YOU AWARE OF THAT BEFORE YOU GAVE THE ISRAELIS PERMISSION TO TRY TO SELL THE KFIRS?

A. I DON'T KNOW. DO YOU WANT ME TO TAKE THAT QUESTION?

Q. I WOULD LOVE YOU TO TAKE THAT QUESTION.

A. I'D LOVE TO SEE YOU GET THE ANSWER TO IT.

Q. HODDING, THERE ARE A NUMBER OF STORIES TODAY, MOST OF THEM CITING WHITE HOUSE SOURCES WHICH, IN EFFECT, SAY THAT THE TAIWANESE HAVE A CHOICE BETWEEN THE KFIR AND AN

EXPANDED PROGRAM OF CO-PRODUCTION OF THE F5E, AND THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL TURN DOWN THE REQUEST FOR THE F4, THE F-16 AND F-18 AND ANYTHING ELSE THEY HAVE IN MIND. BASICALLY, THAT'S THE CHOICE THEY'VE GOT. THERE IS EVEN A STORY OUT TODAY THAT IF THEY DON'T ACCEPT THAT CHOICE, THEY MIGHT WIND UP WITH NEITHER THE KFIR NOR THE F5E. CAN YOU COMMENT IN SOME HELPFUL WAY ON THOSE STORIES?
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A. NO, EXCEPT TO REPEAT THAT I DO NOT BELIEVE THE FINAL DECISION IS MADE ON WHAT WE MAY OR MAY NOT DO IN TERMS OF A PLANE SALE. A FINAL DECISION, TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, HAS NOT BEEN TAKEN DESPITE THOSE STORIES.

Q. THE STATE DEPARTMENT SAID IN MARCH THAT IT UNDERSTOOD TAIWAN DIDN'T WANT TO PURCHASE THE KFIRS. DID TAIWAN INDICATE IN THE MEANTIME, SINCE MARCH, THAT IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN RECONSIDERING?

A. LET ME JUST STAND ON THAT TAKING THE QUESTION I'VE TAKEN, AND THAT WILL ENCOMPASS, OBVIOUSLY, THE QUESTION YOU'RE ASKING AS WELL. END.

VANCE

NOTE BY OC/T: POUCHED ALGIERS.

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